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June is Dairy Month

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE • AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

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Volume 8, Number 6

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Cover Page

At spring training, Ben Schwartzwalder, nationally famous Syracuse University football coach, emphasizes the role milk plays at the training table. During the season, the 101-man squad drinks 125 quarts daily. According to Schwartzwalder, who led the Orangemen to a national football championship, every month is Dairy Month at Syracuse. Pictured with the coach is Tackle Robert J. Hnat, a senior from Binghamton, N.Y. See related story, "June is Dairy Month," on page 5.

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USDA REVISES TOBACCO GRADES

As time and American agriculture move forward toward a world of the future which our grandfathers would never recognize, changes in what we call the "standards" of agriculture appear as inevitably as the changes in the public taste.

Production of tobacco, which gives the American farmer $8 of every $100 he receives from crops, has gone through a corresponding evolution in recent years, reflecting increased consumer demands through increased production and more efficient production methods.

When this happens with any farm product, standards must be revised—to give the producer more muscle in the market place, to give the manufacturer a better basis for identifying quality and to give the American consumer what he or she wants.

This is now being done by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, through the Tobacco Division of the Agricultural Marketing Service. Changes in standards for flue-cured tobacco, which is grown in six Southern States, have been announced—on the advice of the National Tobacco Industry Advisory Committee.

Flue-cured tobacco is so named because of the heat ducts or flues used in regulating the heat for curing the tobacco.

Standards for flue-cured tobacco were first established in 1936, and revised in 1956, 1958 and 1959. In view of changes in the physical characteristics of flue-cured tobacco further revisions are necessary.

The standards for tobacco may involve more than a hundred different grades for any one of the 26 classes. Under the revision, grades for flue-cured tobacco will be reduced from 173 to 157.

Tobacco grades are determined by official USDA graders located in every tobacco market in the Nation. Grades aid the producer in judicious marketing and furnish a base by which support prices are determined.

A tobacco grade or standard is composed of a combination of symbols denoting group, quality and color. A letter denotes groups, a label for the position of the tobacco leaf on the plant or the general shape of the leaf. A number shows quality, ranging from 1 (choice) to 6 (common). A final letter (or letters) then denotes the color of the leaf.

Thus a "lot" of tobacco may be given the grade "B3FR." This would mean the lot belonged to the "leaf" group (B), was "good" in quality (3), and was of a light red color (FR). "Leaf" group tobacco comes from the upper portions of the flue-cured plant.

These tobacco grades were designed to reflect the type and quality of the tobacco, and to serve as common denominators for price quoting purposes.

Although the changes in tobacco marketing and production are legion, we can classify them easiest by identifying two major fields of change, varying tastes of consumers and changing methods of production.

Consumer tastes do change, and in the tobacco field this has been notable generally in the phenomenal growth of filter-tip cigarette sales over the past 10 years, and in the continuing trend of consumers to cigarettes instead of other forms of tobacco.

The use of filter-tips on a grand scale has perhaps encouraged tobacco manufacturers to change their concept of quality as related to the usability of tobacco in manufacturing cigarettes.

A wide gamut of factors is involved in the change in methods of production, all relating back eventually to the economic problem of marketing. There has been a tendency on the part of many tobacco farmers to produce quantity rather than quality of product.

This has led many farmers to adopt improper farming techniques.

Such techniques have materially affected the quality of tobacco in recent years. From 1946 through 1950, 31 percent of the Nation's tobacco graded in the top three grades. During 1962, only about 10 percent of all tobacco was in this category.

Some of these practices, and their adverse affects on tobacco are:

1. *Over-fertilization with nitrogen.* Delays maturity, produces heavy-bodied tobacco, high in nicotine.

2. *Improper topping and suckering.* (Topping is the process of breaking off the crown of the tobacco plant. By suckering, the side shoots are broken off to increase leaf development.) Early topping and suckering produces a heavy leaf, while no topping at all results in thin tobacco.

3. *Harvesting immature tobacco.* Tobacco must be mature or fully ripened in the field to produce high quality.

New grades for flue-cured tobacco were needed therefore for two major reasons. First, new standards must be created to reflect more accurately the present characteristics of tobacco. And second, improper production practices must be recognized by the standards, to give producers the incentive to produce a higher quality tobacco, and penalize producers who continue to use poor growing practices.

Both goals were kept in mind as the AMS Tobacco Division, in cooperation with the National Tobacco Industry Advisory Committee, prepared this revision of USDA tobacco standards.

The new tobacco standards stress maturity of the tobacco and certain elements of leaf structure and body, as grade determining factors. They also:

1. Give more detailed descriptions of each grade.

2. Establish an "Elements of Quality" chart to delineate degrees of each element, such as injury and waste tolerance, color intensity, leaf structure, etc.

3. Exclude from many of the standard grades any lot containing more than 20 percent "slick" or tight-faced tobacco. Much of this slick tobacco (or tobacco with a close or tight leaf structure) would be placed into one of the 16 new grades for slick tobacco.

These grades for flue-cured tobacco closely reflect the qualities of tobacco now being produced, and do a better job of distinguishing between mature and immature tobacco, than do the older grades.

This search for better standards for tobacco is only one of the many services performed by the Agricultural Marketing Service in its perennial attempt to improve the marketing of the Nation's agricultural products, and the marketability of the farmer's produce.

Marketing Order Opens New Markets For Ancient Crop

California date growers are earning more money these days by finding new uses and new markets for one of the world's oldest crops—dates.

As the result of a research and development program sponsored by the date growers under a Federal marketing order, a whole new family of date products is on the market, and export markets for California dates have been developed where none existed before.

The new date products have increased in annual sales to manufacturers from about 700,000 pounds in the 1954-55 season to nearly 8 million pounds in the 1961-62 season. New export markets took more than 400,000 pounds of dates last year, and the research program is turning up even more new products and important improvements in processing the dates themselves.

Though the U. S. date industry is still faced with serious problems of heavy production and competition from imported dates, the research and development program has given growers' prospects a boost.

Date growers' returns had fallen below costs of production back in 1954, when the industry decided a marketing order offered them a way to work together on their marketing problems.

After several months of working with marketing order specialists in AMS' Fruit and Vegetable Division, the industry approved a marketing order that limited the amount of dates that could go into their primary market outlet—packaged whole and pitted dates.

Thus they could tailor their crop to their market, and improve their returns.

Surplus or "restricted" dates that could not be sold profitably as packaged whole dates in the U. S. market were to be diverted to processing outlets—that is outlets which would not compete with packaged dates. As the program developed, these markets for 'restricted" dates came to include export outlets as well as product outlets.

But what outlets? The industry was not selling enough date products to manufacturers to take care of their expected surplus.

The Date Administrative Committee, the local industry organization which administers the marketing order, decided that the answer lay in developing new markets for their dates.

Their marketing order included a provision for marketing research and development projects to improve the marketing, distribution and consumption of the commodity.

The big sales break-through was the development of date granules. This was a new product, ideal for use in a date bar mix. Other date products were soon on the market too—in date muffins, date bread, date-nut cake, date-nut ice cream, and in frozen date cake batter.

The administrative committee has also permitted handlers to use some of the "restricted" dates to develop export markets for dates in countries that had not been importing significant amounts of California dates.

Mexico was approved as an export outlet the first season, and bought more than 100,000 pounds of whole dates. Additional countries have now been approved, and 403,000 pounds of California dates were shipped to these export markets last year.

The research program is paying further dividends too. Under a cost-sharing project with the administrative committee, the USDA Utilization Research and Development laboratory at Pasadena started looking for a way to keep dates from turning hard when they were exposed to the air for long periods.

The search was successful. The scientists found that through an enzyme process they could invert some of the natural sugars with the result that dates would be softer and would stay soft for longer periods. And they found that the enzyme process would change dry fruit into softer, smoother, high-quality

Above, some date products that have led to
Below, water to cover one acre 10 to 20 fe
its "feet in water and its head in the fires

new markets for one of the world's oldest crops. eet deep is used each year. Date palm must have of heaven."

dates! The process can be used to improve the quality of all types of dates, and artificial ripening may eventually allow the growers to harvest all of their dates at once, instead of climbing to the tops of the 60-foot trees several times to get all of the crop.

About a million pounds of dates were pitted last year after going through the enzyme ripening process. These would not have been suitable for pitting before. One firm is now using the process commercially, and a significant portion of the California date crop will probably be processed by the new method in the future.

Packaged whole and pitted dates are still the industry's No. 1 market outlet —and the industry has been using research to improve its consumer packages. The trend is toward fewer sizes and more durable plastic films. A new transparent plastic cup is now being introduced, which will display them more attractively.

The progress made by the date industry illustrates why most of the Federal marketing orders adopted by the fruit and vegetable industries in recent years include the authority for research and development projects. In fact, many of the older orders have been amended to include them too. Thirty-four of the 45 Federal orders in this field now authorize such projects.

The projects themselves can range from gathering marketing statistics to developing new recipes for consumers. The industry decides what direction the research should take, and who should do the work.

The date story is a graphic example of the value of a program tailored to the industry's needs by the industry itself. The date growers have sewn up a larger market for their crop with just such a program and their average price per ton in 1961-62 was more than 50 percent higher than in 1954, the last season before the order was adopted.

June Is Dairy Month

Once again the Nation celebrates June Is Dairy Month, when for the 27th year all facets of that important industry call attention to the nutritious milk and dairy products produced by America's rich farmlands. In a special announcement, Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman has paid high tribute to the industry for its manifold contributions to the Nation's health.

The American Dairy Association serves as master of ceremonies for this early summer promotion for milk and its products. The Association will be assisted by a large number of other dairy organizations.

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service is cooperating with the dairy industry at its period of seasonally high production, by highlighting milk and dairy products on its June listing of plentiful foods. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is also distributing thousands of fact sheets, or "flyers" to the food industry and to the national press, radio and TV outlets. AMS has produced special public service TV and radio spot announcements for use across the country, to call attention to the nutritional values of dairy products for young and old alike.

Supporting this nationwide campaign are State and local producer groups, State departments of agriculture, allied industries, national and regional chain stores, independent grocers, distributors, processors and the food service industry.

State and regional dairy princesses will travel extensively to deliver messages of goodwill and physical fitness from the dairy industry to the public.

In addition, special dairy days will be held, parades and festivals arranged, and proclamations will be issued by mayors and governors over the Nation.

Through newspapers and magazines, radio and television, homemakers will be reminded of the nutritional values of milk and its numerous products, with suggestions of appetizing ways of serving dairy foods not only throughout June but every day of the year.

The Sponsor Committee is headquartered at the American Dairy Association in Chicago. Other organizations sponsoring June is Dairy Month include: American Butter Institute, American Dry Milk Institute, Dairy Association Executives, Dairy Industries' Supply Association, Evaporated Milk Association, International Association of Ice Cream Manufacturers, Milk Industry Foundation, National Cheese Institute, National Creameries Association, National Dairy Council, National Milk Producers' Federation, and the Purebred Dairy Cattle Association.

A Longer Market Life For Blueberries

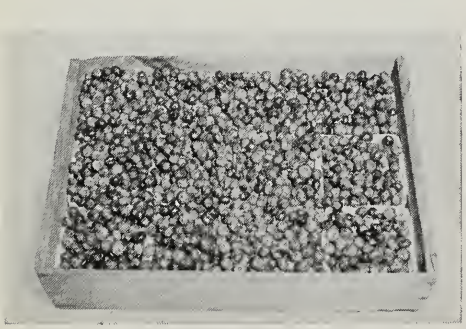
Better Storage More than Doubles Marketing Life

Freshly harvested blueberries have a marketing life that is often less than 1 week—one of the shortest times for any fresh product. But growers and packers can maintain fresh blueberry quality for a full 2 weeks or longer by using storage practices recently recommended by marketing researchers in the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service. These may even double the marketing period to 4 weeks, although some loss of quality can be expected in this time.

The AMS storage recommendations involve equipment and supplies that are readily available to the average grower and packer.

In order to keep blueberries in top condition for a 2-week period after harvest, they should be held at 32° F., with a high humidity level—about 85 percent. For storage until final consumer packaging, berries should be placed in lugs that are lined with plastic film.

Marketing researchers successfully tested these storage practices on 900 pints of commercially packaged blueberries for 2—and 4-week periods in each of two seasons. Several consumer containers and films were used in the tests. Each type was found to be useful for modifying storage and marketing conditions. The tests were conducted in Maryland, New Jersey, and North Carolina by Howard W. Hruschka and Leaton J. Kushman, members of the AMS Market Quality Research Division. Full details are given in a forthcoming marketing research report, "Storage and Shelf Life of Packaged Blueberries." Single free copies are available from the Office of Information USDA.



AMS Biophysicist Receives Kettering Award

Dr. Butler

Dr. Warren L. Butler, leader of biophysical research in the Agricultural Marketing Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, has received one of the first ten awards made by the Charles F. Kettering Foundation to encourage basic and pioneering research in specific fields.

The award to Dr. Butler is intended to encourage creative research on photosynthesis—the way plants use light in their development. It includes an annual grant of up to $5,000 for an indefinite period, for use of the recipient in any way he sees fit to develop his research in his chosen field.

Dr. Butler's work, in the Instrumentation Research Laboratory of the Market Quality Research Division, AMS, centers on the development of techniques for measuring precisely the quality factors in fruits, vegetables, and other foods. Such techniques, with the instruments to apply them, would eliminate the factors of human judgment and human error in the inspection and grading of foods as now performed on most commodities.

The young scientist—he is only 38—already has had a remarkable career. Even during his university days, he developed an instrument that determines the composition of a mixture of gases through measurement of its heat conductivity. In the USDA, he led in developing a technique that measures the phytochrome in plants—an enzyme that governs the time of flowering, rate of growth, and other factors in plant life.

Dr. Butler received his bachelor's degree in physics from Reed College, in Portland, Oreg., and his doctorate from the University of Chicago, where he studied under a Nobel prize winner in physics. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

From 1943 to 1946, he was in service in the infantry, and received numerous awards, including the Purple Heart. He was wounded in service in Germany, and as a result his left hand and left leg were amputated.

Recipients of the type of award granted to Dr. Butler are selected by a committee of the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council from among "recognized research leaders" in the field of photosynthesis and related areas.

Poultry-Egg Exhibits Available

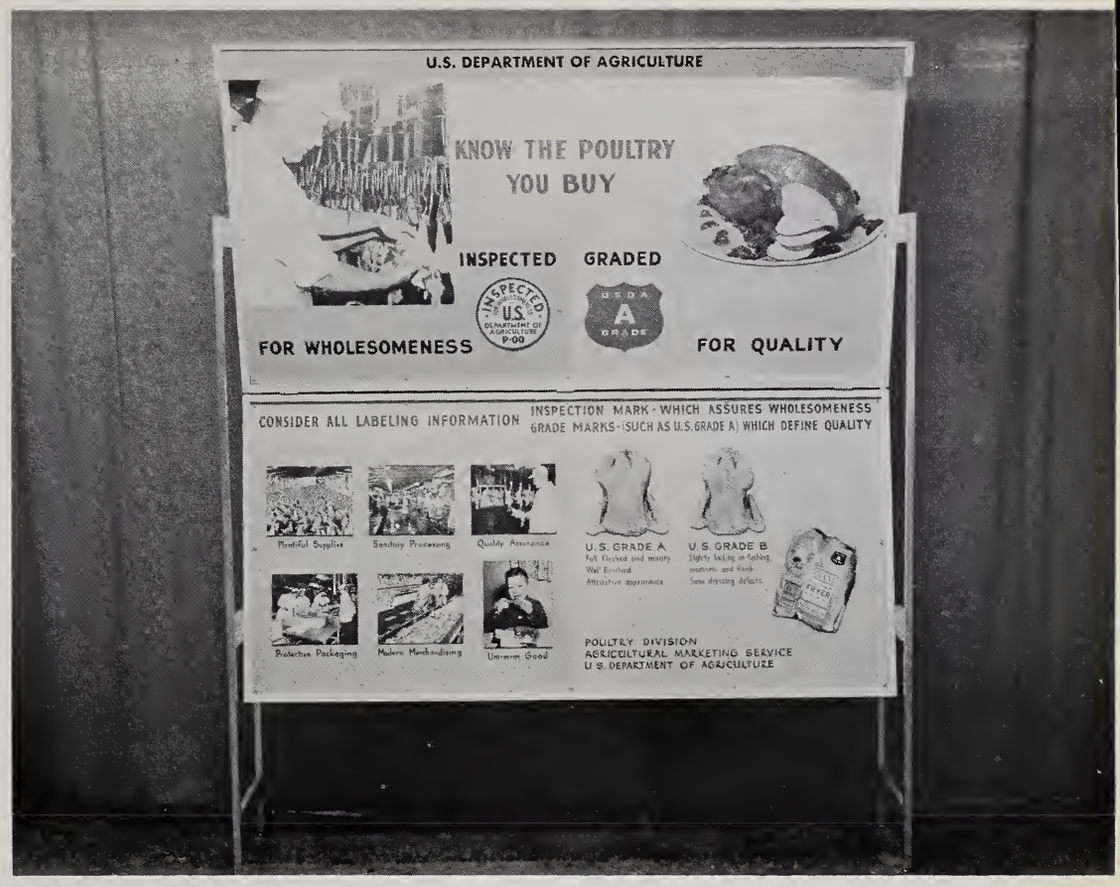
These two new Agricultural Marketing Service exhibits—one on U.S. egg sizes and grades, and one on U.S. poultry inspection and grading—are now available to all interested groups for showing at conventions, fairs, meetings, etc., on a "first-come, first-served" basis. Only charge will be for shipping costs, based on total weights of 123 pounds for each exhibit.

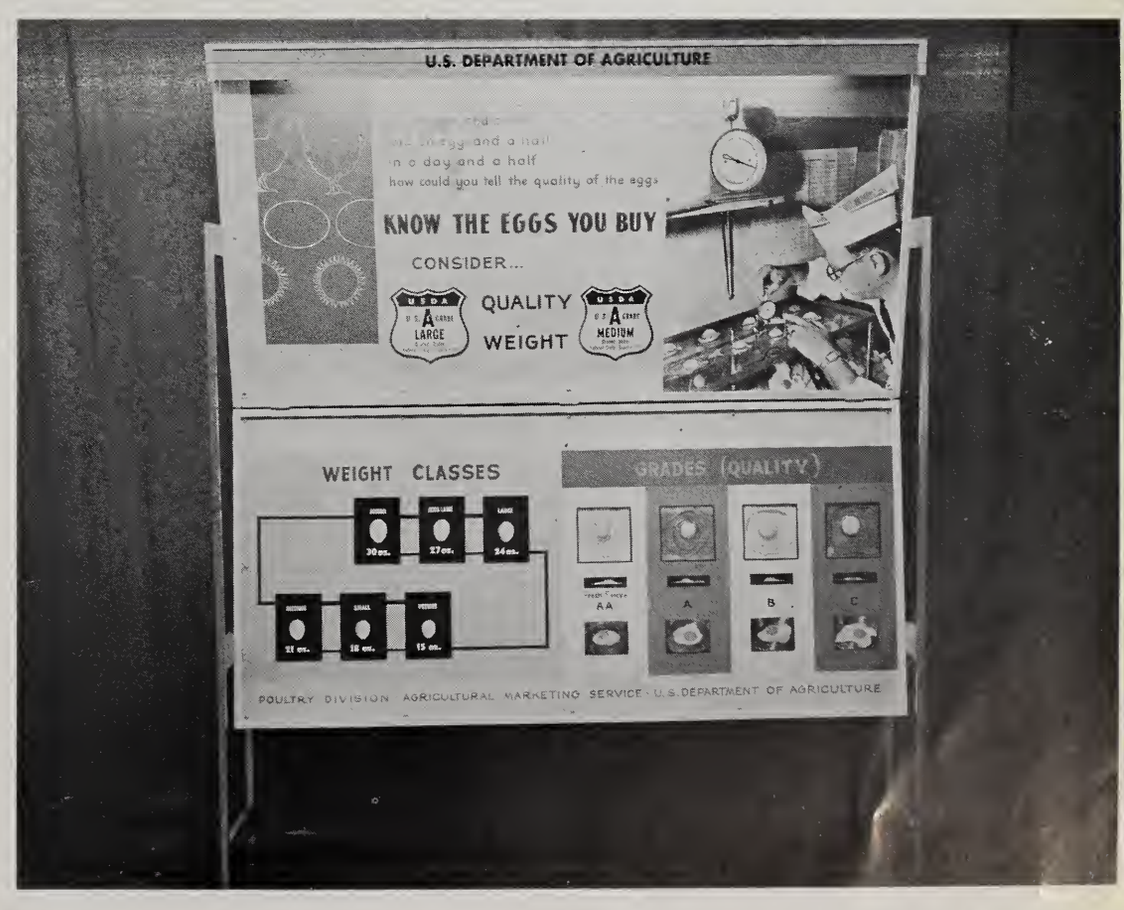
The exhibits use several colors of lettering, symbols, background, etc., to get their messages across. The egg exhibit (AMS-42) emphasizes the two main factors to consider when buying eggs—quality as measured by letter grade marks, AA, A, B and C—and weight, as measured by the words Peewee, Small, Medium, Large, Extra Large and Jumbo. It shows the official shield mark which indicates that eggs have been graded and sized.

The poultry exhibit (AMS-41) stresses the distinction between inspection for wholesomeness and grading for quality. It explains and illustrates the differences between U.S. Grade A and U.S. Grade B chickens. The poultry exhibit shows both the official circular poultry inspection mark and the official shield-shaped poultry grading mark.

Other exhibits are also available from the Poultry Division. They are pictured and described in the leaflet, "Poultry and Egg Marketing Exhibits," which is obtainable from the Poultry Division. Applications and inquiries should be addressed to Poultry Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

About 30 million cases of shell eggs and 3 billion pounds of all types of poultry including turkeys are graded each year by the Grading Branch in over 600 plants. Some 6½ billion pounds of poultry is certified as wholesome each year by the Inspection Branch. About 2 billion birds are examined annually, almost all the processed poultry shipped in interstate commerce.





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USDA RESEARCHES FOR BROADER WOOL COVERAGE

ACCURATE, unbiased, and timely market news has become invaluable for the livestock producer who is going to obtain the maximum return on his production effort and investment. If the producer is to make intelligent marketing decisions, he must have accurate and detailed information about supplies, demand, grades, and prices of various commodities at specific market locations. Equally important, he must have this information quickly—before market conditions change to any great extent.

While the Livestock Division of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service has been reporting the Nation's livestock, meat, and wool trading for almost half a century, the Livestock Market News Service has never reached a final state of development—and probably never will. As industry marketing patterns and practices change, so must the market news service. How does a market news service keep pace with the industry it serves? Through constant research, by continually studying marketing methods and trends, and by keeping its reporters trained in modern, up-to-date reporting practices. A wool reporting research project underway right now, for example, could very well provide the basis for broader, more realistic coverage of wool trading in the United States.

For many years, a major portion of the wool produced in this country has been sold through the Boston primary wool market, but experience in recent years has indicated that more and more wool sales are being completed in Western wool-producing States. As the marketing pattern has shifted, producers have expressed a greater need for more information on production-area sales.

The research project, being conducted by the Marketing Economics Division of the Economic Research Service and the Livestock Division of AMS, is designed to determine the kinds, amounts, accuracy and availability of additional information producers need in order to make sound marketing decisions. While the project got underway late into last year's shearing season, initial results have already indicated a definite need for more specific and detailed information on sales of wool in local markets—information relating to fiber fineness, yield, and staple length. Without such information, most producers are in a poor position to estimate the value of their product, which in turn, puts them in a relatively poor bargaining position.

To adequately and accurately reflect market conduct and performance, and to act as a general pricing guideline for both buyers and sellers, market quotations must be based on actual market transactions. To provide the basis for such quotations, the AMS Livestock Division is making available—on a part time basis—reporters from 10 market news offices in the 11 Western States and Texas. The reports gathered by these men are not only channeled into Boston for inclusion in national wool market news summaries, but are also released locally through press, radio, and television. This provides the producer with more detailed information about markets in his own area, and makes the information available much sooner than it could be provided in a national summary.

Reporters are making use of many different sources of market information. They check with producers, buyers, warehouse operators, and cooperative marketing agents. Trading at some 30 warehouses is covered on a regular basis. Ranch and shearing pen sales are covered as time and manpower permit. Even though the project started rather late last year, it is estimated that trading on some 20-million pounds of grease wool was reported—sales information which had not been reported in detail prior to last year.

The ultimate usefulness of these market reports is determined almost entirely by the accuracy of the information that goes into them. To maintain a relatively high degree of accuracy, spot checks are made on cooperators' appraisals and estimates of quality, yield, and staple length. Objective test data is being obtained from commercial testing laboratories, State experiment stations, warehouses which operate laboratories and the AMS Denver Wool Laboratory where official U.S. grade standards for wool are developed.

As a further means of maintaining the highest possible degree of accuracy, the reporters assigned to this program have attended two training courses at the Denver Laboratory. Working with the standardization staff there, the reporters have familiarized themselves with grade standards and their application, shrinkage sampling techniques and reporting terminology.

While the final results of this study will not be known for several months, the Livestock Market News Service has already gathered a great deal of information—much of it from portable testing laboratories which move about easily from one market to another—which will be useful in improving its wool market news coverage.

An AMS wool market news reporter interviews a trade member.